DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 171 043 EC 115 252

AUTHOR Moody, Janet B.; Bozeman, Rhoushelle
TITLE Integration and Mainstreaming of Communicatively Disordered Children.
PUB DATE Apr 79
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Convention, The Council for Exceptional Children (57th, Dallas, Texas, April 22-27, 1979, Session F-2)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Instructional Materials; *Language Handicapped; *Mainstreaming; *Success Factors; Teaching Methods; Verbal Learning

ABSTRACT

The paper presents an overview of the factors involved in providing successful mainstreaming experiences to severely language disordered (SLD) children. Among aspects considered are individualization, behavior management procedures, independent problem solving and decision making, group test taking skills and experiences, social emotional growth, independent living skills, motivation, frustration tolerance, study skills, large group abilities, oral language skills, mathematics abilities, and composition skills. Three areas are emphasized for instruction with SLD children: adaptation of material, directions, and independence. Guidelines are given for allowing student options in materials, sidestepping the students' difficulties with oral directions, and encouraging student independence. (CI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED171043

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Integration and Mainstreaming of Communicatively Disordered Children

International CEC Conference
Dallas, Texas
April, 1979

Janet B. Moody

Rhoushelle Bozeman

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

CEC

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EC115252

Integration and Mainstreaming of Communicatively Disordered Children

Mainstreaming refers to the temporal, instructional and social integration of eligible exceptional children with normal peers. It is based on an ongoing individually determined educational needs assessment, requiring clarification of responsibility for coordinated planning and programming by regular and special education administrative, instructional and support personnel.

Children with specific learning disabilities exhibit a disorder in one or more of the basic symbolic processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling or arithmetic. They include conditions which have been referred to as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and language disordered.

Working under the premise of this information we hope to provide information regarding the process of integrating and mainstreaming the Severely Language Disordered (SLD) child.

A Severely Language Disordered (SLD) child is defined as one who manifests a severe disability in the comprehension and/or expression of oral language and who shows normal intellectual potential.

There are several areas that influence the partial mainstreaming of the SLD child in the regular classroom. One of the major areas deals with providing inservice information for regular classroom teachers and staff as to the nature and behavioral characteristics of the SLD child. Too often we as Special Educators are confronted with the belief that these children are retarded or have behavior problems. An effective way of changing these special education myths and stereotypes is to describe the SLD child. Video tapes, open houses, and classroom observations have been very effective in removing some of those myths and stereotypes. This is especially important since the idea of mainstreaming the SLD child is still

new. The inservice should focus on some of the associated behavioral characteristics that a SLD child may bring to the regular classroom. The SLD child may be overly active, or be very slow to respond. They may experience gross and/or fine motor disabilities in addition to the difficulties manifested in central language, receptive oral language, expressive oral language, math numeration, receptive written language, expressive written language and math reasoning. Channel function (auditory memory, auditory sequencing, auditory discrimination, auditory motor, laterality, directionality, spaciality-temporality, auditory closure and auditory fusion), may be disordered as well.

Teaching methods in SLD classrooms vary from that in a regular classroom by the intensity and frequency of the methods used. Individualizing is an essential area, because many children do not breakdown in the same language or academic areas. Therefore, individualization may occur within a milieu (group) or on a one to one activity level.

In the SLD classroom the emphasis is placed on the procedure involved in an activity as well as the activity itself. The SLD child is taught how to prepare a paper for a test (writing name, date, subject and numbering his paper appropriately), how to check out library books and how to answer the telephone appropriately and take messages.

The types of behavior management procedures is another area that may vary according to the preference of the SLD classroom teacher and the needs of the children. Most SLD classrooms utilize incentives/rewards to increase the frequency of propositional language and social behaviors. The incentives used are food, tokens, contracts and social praise. In order to prepare the SLD child for partial mainstreaming his teacher must systematically plan to move him on the behavior management continum from concrete to the acceptable incentives utilized by the majority of regular school teachers.

An important factor to consider when partially mainstreaming the SLD child

is his adjustment when moving from a small class with a teacher and an instructional aide to a class of 30 students and one classroom teacher. Therefore, it is imperative for the SLD teacher to structure activities and situations to encourage the SLD child to engage in problem solving and decision making on his own. Unless the child receives this encouragement and some of the skills necessary to make these decisions, they will always rely on the classroom teacher for answers. Independence and self regulation are skills needed in the adult world. At the beginning of third grade and beyond much of the classroom activities is non-directed or pupil motivated. The SLD teachers can foster independence by having the class determine the classroom rules, decide the types of extra-curricular activities they will participate in and problem solve classroom disputes.

In the area of academic skills, the SLD teacher should aim for grade level skill expectations. This will provide the possibility for appropriate placement for the child in a regular classroom. This also makes necessary the exchange of information between the SLD teacher and the regular classroom teacher concerning the child's ability level and the expectations awaiting him.

Since group testing is the primary means of assessing achievement in most school systems, the SLD child needs group test taking skills and experiences. In order for this to take place the SLD classroom teacher must provide opportunities to take tests in groups. These tests should call for various responses to questions and statements, multiple choice, true-flase, short answer and dictation. (These tests must be modified to the reading level of the SLD students.)

The SLD teacher and regular education teacher must continually re-evaluate the expectations for the SLD child integrated in the regular classroom. This can be accomplished by utilizing anecdotals, oral reports and periodic progress reports, as well as classroom observation.

As the child is integrated, he may experience difficulties in some academic skills he hasn't been exposed to or is unable to grasp. Therefore, he may require additional tutoring in order to keep up with his regular education counterparts.

Some of the supplemental help given to SLD children may be provided by the regular classroom teacher, the SLD teacher or aide, cross-age tutor and/or private tutor.

SLD children may be mainstreamed with regular school children in various ways for:

a. academic skills (reading, math, spelling, language arts, social studies and science).

b. social skills (recess, lunch, assemblies, dances and plays).

c. career oriented (assisting school secretary, cafeteria manager, librarian and custodian).

d. cross-age tutor (to work in lower grades as a tutor).

e. student council (to participate as officers, representatives, alternates and in fund raising events).

f. physical education (to participate on school teams, classroom teams).

It is important to gradually increase the length of time the SLD child is integrated in the regular classroom. This extension of time gives the SLD teacher more accurate information concerning how the SLD child will perform on a full time basis in a regular classroom without assistance or with minimal assistance from the itinerant language teacher specialist.

Within the realm of Social Emotional Growth, there are several areas to consider. One of the primary ones is the quality of peer relations. There have been too many loners returning to the regular classrooms. They have had difficulty making and keeping friends. This must change if we want the SLD child to have confidence in himself and the world in which he lives. Many times teachers are not aware of these children. They stay on the outskirts of play activities never getting actively involved. When they do find opportunities to relate to other children, it is usually brief and short lived. These occurances do not grow into friendships.

Another area to consider is that of Independent Living Skills. Because in a regular classroom there is more emphasis on responsibility, the need to learn how to take care of lunch money, books, homework, bus numbers, etc., becomes paramount. The SLD child needs to have more normal expectations placed on him

while he is still in the special education setting. Adjusting to a bell schedule, working in the cafeteria, listening to adults other than his teacher should all be well established skills for a returning child.

Let us look more closely at the SLD child's ability to relate to adults. The greatest need in this area lies in the need for adult approval and reinforcement. This dependence must be broken. The child must learn to give himself this approval and to seek it from adults intermittently rather than on a continuous basis.

Motivation on the part of the child can not be over emphasized. When a child verbalizes no longer wanting to be in a special class, but prefers to be in the "other class", it is time to place this child in as normal an environment as possible. Adolescent or older children often need to discuss the reasons behind their special class placement. They want to know what is wrong with them. If they are O.K. why can't they read as well as their friends? How long are they going to be here and what must they do to get out? Much the same questioning is heard from Educationally Handicapped and Learning Disable adolescents.

How the SLD child functions in a group, especially a large group, becomes very important in the mainstreaming process. If he is able to maintain his level of performance when the teacher is shared with thirty other children, he shows excellent potential in this area. The ability to attend in a group without an adult regulating his attention is another indicator of readiness to adapt in a regular classroom.

Another consideration is the playground and the ability to cope with one to two hundred children at one time. These are all normal daily occurences in the life of the average school child.

The last area for consideration is that of frustration tolerance. It is necessary to establish realistic goals for the child and the teacher. The child must learn to deal with failure without it causing undue frustration. The teacher is instrumental here with her selection of the appropriate task for the child.

The need for the child to be able to respond appropriately must be taken into consideration with task selection. On the other hand, the child must learn to deal with not knowing how to do a problem by seeking help rather than becoming frustrated and unwilling to respond because of fear of failure.

Study Skills are another realm of mainstreaming that must be considered. The child's ability to work independently becomes increasingly important the older he gets. The child is expected to go from one subject area to another without directions being repeated. This can be impossible for a SLD child who has had no training in independent study skills. Learning to look for and choose alternatives can be equally as hard. If the teacher cannot respond at once, the child must learn to go to the next problem or find something to do until the teacher can come and give him the needed instruction.

As the child learns to work independently he must make choices concerning individual attention needs. He has to realize there is only one adult in the room most of the time. Because of this situation, he must learn to use information gained previously to help deal with the present problem. For a SLD child to accomplish this level of independence is extremely important.

Learning to adjust to the demands of a regular classroom means having to deal with time constraints. In order to do this it is necessary to familiarize the child with timed activities. Deadlines have to be established and met.

If timed activities are to be successful being able to attend to specific tasks in individual and group setting is vital. First of all the level of distractability must be appropriate for the task presented and for the grade level involved. Learning to take dictation of spelling sentences is a good example of a means of teaching children to focus their attention on a task.

When in a large group the child must learn the appropriate means of gaining attention when he needs help. Learning to raise his hand and ask questions may be difficult if this child usually waits for the teacher to discover he has problems. In a small group this is a possible solution, in a group of thirty it

is not. Coping with emergencies may be a new experience for this child. Teaching him who to go to in an emergency situation is a must. This is true for his own safety as well as the safety of others.

Another area that must be dealt with, especially at the higher grade levels, is the need to generalize a routine. The need to adapt to schedules, bells, and periods is paramount. Remembering where to go and what will be needed becomes a high priority skill. Because of the isolation that may have been experienced, a SLD child may not be prepared for these new responsibilities.

The area of study skills is broad and varied. Therefore, it is hard to deal with, but it must become a high priority for integration and mainstreaming older students.

The realm of academics must be focused on if we intend to give this child as much as possible to insure his success.

The area of reading is usually the most influential here. With the SLD child the comprehension skills run one to two years behind the age/grade level. This has not caused significant problems in terms of placement. As long as we can stay within two years of the age/grade level, the child seems to be able to maintain. If the delay is more than two years, as it often is with high school students, the problems become more pronounced.

One of the greatest problems lies in word recognition. Too many of our children have excellent phonics skills, but a very limited sight vocabulary. Because of this, they rely too heavily on "sounding out" words and do not know how to look for word patterns or word families.

In each case it will be necessary to deal with the different levels of functioning within each grade. In placing a fifth grade student reading at a second grade level, the general level of functioning of both the class and the child must be considered.

Mathematic skills must be looked at as well. The ability to do computation and reasoning problems needs to be within two years of age/grade level. Many children are able to make excellent gains in computation skills, but will have severe problems with reasoning skills. Since this is true for many children, additional help can usually be provided. With this help they are usually able to maintain in the normal classroom setting.

The composition skills seem to be the most neglected ones. This includes handwriting and spelling. Cursive writing should be started as soon as possible so that these children do not go into the area of handwriting totally unprepared. Memory for spelling skills must be stressed. Learning to spell the words we read is an important skill that many of the SLD children are not being taught to do.

Because of the initial identification of the severe language disorder or delay, there is a lot of emphasis on oral language skills. The speech production should be intelligible, although there may still be a need for speech therapy. The difficulties should be in the area of simple articulation errors.

Where difficulties do arise is in the receptive oral language area. Being able to process information within time allocations in a regular classroom often becomes a problem. Because of this, it becomes even more important that the child be able to watch others and determine what he should do if he is not able to process all of the oral input. The skills needed to do this are not always instinctive. They may have to be taught.

The rate of recent growth may be a good indication for mainstreaming success. If there has been a recent growth spurt in social maturity, language and/or academic areas, this may serve as an indication of readiness. These behavioral factors are important and should be monitored over a period of time before a decision is made.

There are three areas that should be emphasized. These are Adaptation of Material, Directions and Independence. These form a core area from which the

SLD child will find either success or failure.

For the SLD child with delayed reading skills use of textbooks for the majority of the instruction given can be disasterous. This child may be able to process information presented orally, but not when presented in written form. As a teacher, allow options such as the following:

class members reading aloud to one another

teacher presents material orally

use of tape recordings

use of simple terms in direction giving

cross-age tutor reads to child

It will also be necessary to give some options for responding such as:

oral discussions

group work

class projects

Be willing to adapt methods of presentation and responding to the abilities of the necessary children or child. Allow them a means of participation and involvement in the daily activities of a learning environment.

It is the inability to act on directions, especially those given orally, that often leads to identification of the SLD child. Because of this, there are some guidelines to consider.

Some of those guidelines include consistently checking the child's attention during direct instruction periods. This can be implemented by an effective seating arrangement or by purposely including the child actively in the instruction giving process. The latter works to increase the child's attentiveness and validate that the child has processed the necessary information.

The language disordered child often becomes lost during lengthy verbal instructions. Therefore, it is necessary to give only what information is needed and to consistently ask questions to insure adequate understanding as well as the development of necessary listening skills. This child must be taught

how to listen.

If information is to be retained for any length of time, the presentation should be logical and organized. Skipping from one point to another will delay retention and impede attentiveness. Using a stepping stone approach to concept development reinforces the overall process of learning.

Be aware of the vocabulary used. Stay with simple terms that do not confuse the child. Use one set of terms; do not alternate. Be willing to give the child a demonstration or model of the desired behavior. Let him see how he is to respond so he can imitate.

The importance of independence in the regular classroom cannot be over emphasized. If a child continuously asks questions he cannot be working independently. There are several ways to work to increase independence. Some of them are as follows:

use of simple directions either oral or written

response must be clearly indicated

use as few words as possible

ask for one response only

use formats that the child recognizes

The child must be confident of what he is accountable for. He must know exactly what to do to complete the assignment. Assignments open for interpretation may prove to be confusing and frustrating.

Reward success for independent activities. This will insure continuation of effort in this area. If the child is able to establish his independence in the classroom, not only will a specific skill show proficiency, but his overall view of himself will reflect a new confidence.

Before we can develop or use the information we have discussed, we need to know what the school districts are doing. How aware and involved are the regular education teachers? We must realize the prejudices that exist and how they will be aimed at the SLD child. Many teachers don't understand a child's problem

and don't want to understand. We as special educators must change that whenever possible. Be aware of these attitudes and don't let them discourage you.

The regular and special educator must realize that they are dealing with the same behaviors. It is the frequency and intensity of these behaviors that sends the child into the special class.

As special education teachers we are obligated to teach the child the behaviors needed to succeed in the regular classroom. In order to do this, it has become necessary to find out what is considered to be normal and appropriate behaviors. We must be realistic in our decisions.

Language disordered children must learn to relate to adults in an appropriate way. They need to be exposed to the school staff in much the same way as their non-handicapped counterparts have been.

We have attempted to present an overview of the factors involved in providing successful mainstreaming experiences. We feel that it is necessary for personnel in both special and regular education to be aware of these factors. Unless they are, our success can only be limited.